

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Annual Report of the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 605.110 (3) (a)-(f), KRS 158.135 (2) (a) (b) (4) 137, 505 KAR 1:080

History/Background:

Existing Policy. The Kentucky General Assembly enacted the landmark Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990; however, the needs of state agency children were not specifically addressed. As a result, the Kentucky General Assembly in 1992 passed Senate Bill 260 establishing the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KRS 158.135). In 1994, House Bill 826 broadened the eligibility for state agency children beyond those located in state operated and contracted day treatment, group homes, and residential placements. House Bill 826 expanded the definition of state agency children to include those youth placed or financed through the Cabinet for Families and Children in other residential treatment programs. The General Assembly in 1996 enacted House Bill 117, which established the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice and subsequently transferred responsibility for youthful and public offenders to the new agency. In 1998, House Bill 447 and House Bill 689 further expanded the definition of state agency children to include youth in therapeutic foster care and those confined to state-operated juvenile detention facilities.

KRS 158.135 requires that KECSAC report annually to the Chief State School Officer. The statute says: “The Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children shall make to the Chief State School Officer the reports required concerning school services for state agency children and shall file with the Cabinet for Families and Children unit operating or regulating the institution or day treatment center, or contracting for services, in which the children are located a copy of the annual report made to the Chief State School Officer.”

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) has recently engaged in conversations about the educational services supported through KECSAC. At its April 2005 meeting, the KBE requested that KECSAC programs analyze their CATS data to determine ways to improve educational services to the youth served in these programs. Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, all KECSAC programs will be required to analyze their CATS data in order to develop and implement a plan for program improvement. These improvement plans will establish baselines for student academic performance, which can be utilized thereafter for continuous program improvement. Additionally at the December 2005 meeting of the KBE,

a discussion was held regarding the evaluation instrument used with KECSAC programs. Although a new instrument had been developed for use with A5 programs, the KBE felt the evaluation instrument developed for use with KECSAC programs was appropriate and suitable for use with their programs (A6 programs).

The 2005 Kentucky Performance Report for A6 programs (Attachment 1) shows serious academic deficiencies for State Agency Children, with an overall decline in the Total Academic Indices for elementary and middle school students from 2004 to 2005. The Total Academic Index for elementary students in 2005 was 28.4 (down from 35.2 in 2004). The Total Academic Index for middle school students was 33.6 in 2005 (down from 34.8 in 2004). Although there was a slight gain for high school students between 2004 and 2005, the Total Academic Index for these students remains very low at 37.4.

Staff from KECSAC will present their annual report to the KBE at the February 2006 meeting. Attachments related to the annual report include the KECSAC Summary of Work (Attachment 2), the KECSAC Program Improvement Tool (Attachment 3) and the Standards and Indicators: Descriptors and Evidence (SIDE Document) (Attachment 4).

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Increasing numbers of Kentucky students are receiving educational services in KECSAC (A6) programs. As these numbers of students grow, the quality of education services they receive in these programs becomes increasingly important in regard to reaching proficiency.

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Commissioner of Education

Date:

February 2006